

Community Lifestyle Statement

Introduction

The university has deliberately sought to develop Christ-centered community to fulfill its mission and further its core values. As the university has grown it has spawned specialized communities within the larger George Fox community. These include the historic community of young students who live in university residence halls, students who are over 25 years old, living in their own homes some distance from the campus where they study and students who study at George Fox University campuses away from Newberg. There are also communities of faculty and staff at various campuses.

These several communities lead to a George Fox University lifestyle statement that has some variations reflecting differences among us.

Lifestyle Standards and Values for the George Fox University Community

As a community we encourage and teach our members to follow Jesus Christ and be collaborators in God's work in the world. We urge each member to become the kind of person and live the kind of life that Jesus taught and modeled. We believe such a life is described by the "fruit of the Spirit" as listed in Galatians 5:22-23. These fruits include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

We believe the Bible teaches that all persons are created in God's image and that God actively seeks renewed relationships with every individual. We are bound therefore to regard each person with love and respect (Romans 12:9-21, 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 4:32). So we avoid discrimination, abusive or

manipulative actions, and gossip or mean-spirited behaviors. We seek actively to honor each person, loving and serving one another as Jesus taught us.

Our lifestyle excludes immoral practices and calls us to transformed living as we "offer [our] bodies as living sacrifices" to God (Romans 12:1-2). In regard to sexual morality, we believe that only marriage between a man and a woman is God's intention for the joyful fulfillment of sexual intimacy. This should always be in the context of mutual compassion, love, and fidelity. Sexual behaviors outside of this context are inconsistent with God's teaching. We recognize these principles may conflict with the practice or opinion of some within the larger culture. We are convinced that this is God's design for providing the most loving guidance and practice for individuals and our community.

For a community to be successful its members must live with integrity. This includes doing honest academic work, telling each other the truth, keeping our promises, and living so our actions match our words (James 1:22-25).

The university is eager for each member of the community to grow spiritually (Hebrews 10:24-25). We encourage involvement in activities designed to nurture spiritual growth. This includes Bible study, small prayer groups, service opportunities, and chapel attendance. The university encourages all members of the community to maintain personal practices of discipleship and to participate in a local church.

Our goal is to help each community member to think the same way Christ thought (Philippians 2:5). This includes disciplining our minds to think about whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, and excellent, worthy of praise as commended to us in Philippians 4:8. We avoid giving attention to what is obscene and pornographic, whether in print, on

the Internet, or in entertainment. We choose entertainment that will strengthen, not undermine the "mind of Christ." We avoid gambling, not only to practice good stewardship of our resources, but also to prevent welcoming greed inwardly and joining in the social inequities on which gambling thrives.

While we recognize that committed Christians differ in how they view the consumption of alcoholic beverages, it is clear that the improper use of alcohol by students, faculty or staff could bring much harm to the communities of George Fox University. This is especially true of the traditional undergraduate community which consists largely of students who are under the legal drinking age. Nationally, it is well documented that underage and binge drinking as well as driving with significant blood alcohol levels are major problems on college campuses. In addition, there is growing evidence that some individuals are predisposed to alcoholism. For these reasons, the use of alcohol by traditional undergraduate students is not allowed at any time they are enrolled at the university.

Within committed Christian communities there are diverse views regarding the use of alcohol. Some choose a testimony of abstinence for a variety of legitimate and honorable reasons while others believe they can use alcohol occasionally and moderately without harm to their body, spirit or relationships with others. As a community that honors Spirit-led diversity among Christians, George Fox University employees and students in non-traditional programs (degree-completion and graduate programs) are given the freedom of Spirit-led conscience in deciding whether to consume alcoholic beverages in moderation when not in the presence of students from traditional undergraduate programs.

Distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on a George Fox University campus with the exception of unique events that

receive prior approval from the President's Executive Team. The university does not serve or use alcohol when undergraduate students are present. Further, we are a smoke-free campus (including vapor cigarettes) and the use of tobacco and marijuana, in any form, is not permitted in any George Fox University facility or the grounds. Please see the student handbook and employee handbook to review our alcohol, drugs, and smoking policies in their entirety.

The goal of the George Fox University lifestyle standard is to create a community in which individuals are encouraged to be transformed into the image of Christ. In addition, we desire that our common life would reflect the teachings and Spirit of Christ in all that we do and say. In this ongoing process of transformation, all members of the George Fox Community are encouraged to consider the following questions as a means of self-examination, in the tradition of the historic Friends (Quakers). As individuals or groups within this community reflect on these questions, we encourage them to respond in obedience to God's leading and to seek encouragement, support and accountability from other members of the community.

Am I actively pursuing the highest call of God on my life even if that means giving up a personal "freedom" for the sake of others within the community?

As a member of the George Fox community, do I recognize my duty and responsibility to others within our Christ-centered community?

Am I a faithful steward of the resources which God has entrusted to me?

Do I discipline my mind and body to serve as instruments of God?

These lifestyle standards reflect the university's mission, faith commitments, values, and our rich heritage. They are intended to facilitate our life together

at George Fox University.

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